

**Halifax and Northampton Counties Comprehensive Transportation Plans  
Steering Committee Meeting  
J. Reuben Daniel City Hall, 1040 Roanoke Avenue, Roanoke Rapids, NC  
September 2 – 10:00 AM**

**Attendees**

Joy H. Edwards	Northampton Co. GIS
Gary Brown	Northampton Co. Economic Development
Johnny G. Young	Town of Jackson
Pam Perry	Choanoke Public Transportation Authority
Tony N. Brown	Halifax County Manager
Doris Hawkins	Halifax County GIS
Chris Rountree	Halifax Co. Planning
Dia Denton	Halifax County Clerk
Amanda Jarratt	City of Roanoke Rapids Planning
Paul Sabiston	City of Roanoke Rapids Manager
Richard Parnell	City of Roanoke Rapids Public Works
C.W. "Win" Bridgers, Jr.	NCDOT District Engineer, Division 1
Ann Whitley	Peanut Belt RPO
Saeed Mohamed	NCDOT
Kerry Vallant Morrow	NCDOT
Behshad Norowzi	NCDOT

**Meeting Minutes**

**Introductions**

Kerry Morrow opened the meeting and welcomed everyone. She introduced herself, Saeed Mohamed, and Behshad Norowzi, and gave a brief overview of the CTP study each is overseeing. She is conducting the Halifax County Study, Mr. Mohamed is working on the Northampton County Study, and Mr. Norowzi is in charge of the CTP Study for the Roanoke Rapids Urban Area. Each attendee introduced himself/herself to the group.

**Review of September Meeting**

Mrs. Morrow passed out a copy of the September meeting minutes and went over the highlights of that meeting. The minutes were accepted as presented.

**2035 Capacity Deficiency Maps**

Mrs. Morrow explained the color codes of the deficiency maps and pointed out places where the roads were currently over capacity according to her data. She said they would make recommendations for those places, such as widening, turn lanes, and things like that.

**Halifax County**

Mrs. Morrow worked with committee members from Halifax County to identify areas roads that are currently experiencing high traffic rates and areas where traffic is likely to increase in the future. Areas identified were:

- NC 301 going north outside of Enfield - congestion

- NC 301 at the intersection with NC 481 south of Enfield – congestion
- Intersection of NC 125 and 903
- NC 903 where it crosses the railroad tracks at the stoplight – many trains go through every day and it is especially bad at rush hours
- (2 roads) outside of Weldon where there is a lot of development along the roads
- Intersection at Essex where five roads come together
- Flashing lights at two places near the intersection at Essex

### Northampton County

Mr. Mohamed showed the committee the Northampton Map with the expected 2035 deficiency sections, which were on US 158 between Garysburg and Jackson, and between Conway to the Hertford County line. He worked with committee members from Northampton County to locate high traffic roads. Areas where traffic is likely to increase in the future were pinpointed.

- Mr. Bridgers, the District Engineer, mentioned that NC 35 has narrow lanes, alignment issues, in addition to sight distance. He also mentioned that NC 35 has a large number of trucks using this route to VA, and back and forth between the paper mills in Northampton and Bertie Counties. 500-acre industrial park in Northampton County will need additional transportation consideration as it develops in future years.
- Mr. Brown mentioned that there is a big future 500 acres development coming to the area in the north east quadrant of I-95 and NC 46, where currently the Lowe's Distribution Center exists. This future development will include big companies with ware houses, Big Box Operations, companies' orientations...etc and is expected to generate lots of traffic. I-95 will be congested when the industrial park development starts, and it was suggested that north-south traffic off of I-95 will need to be rerouted to NC 301.
- Mr. Brown also mentioned that Moore's Ferry Road (SR 1200) is a vital road in the area and has narrow lanes, and according to the future plans, or in case of rerouting I-95 traffic during emergencies, this route will need improvement.
- The Northampton Committee agreed that there are no bikers that use the existing defined bike route that runs along the whole northern boarder of the county from Warren County to Hertford County along SR 1214, SR 1201, and SR 1333.

### **Survey Results**

#### Halifax County

Planning Committee members were given a handout of the Halifax County survey results. Mrs. Morrow went over the survey questions and results. She noted that NC 301, NC 561, NC 125, and NC 41 were singled out in the survey as problem areas.

Pam Perry spoke about the services provided by the Choanoke Public Transportation Authority, which currently are on-demand service to colleges, medical facilities, and human services locations throughout the four county area, as well as trips for shopping and other trips. She said a fixed route in Roanoke Rapids was possible in the future. Ms. Perry said a fixed route was tried in Scotland Neck in the past, but not enough people used it to make it feasible. Mrs. Morrow asked if a fixed route along US 158 to major spots such as Community College, the Hospital, and shopping might be possible.

Ms. Perry said they could look into that, but that most people who would use it do not have transportation to US 158 in order to access the public transportation option.

#### Northampton County

Mr. Mohamed updated the Committee members on the status of the Northampton County survey. He said there was an error in the website address in the newspaper and he had not received many survey returns. As a result, the newspaper ad will be corrected and he has extended the deadline until January 15, 2010. He will also place the surveys in more places around the county. Mr. Mohamed told the committee the result of the survey will be compiled and either emailed to the members or discussed in the next meeting in mid February

#### **Roanoke Rapids/Weldon/Gaston/Garysburg Study**

##### Calibration of Base Year Model

Mr. Norowzi gave a presentation of the TransCAD modeling of the area, showing the annual daily traffic totals for the base year of 2007 and the projections for the end year of 2035. He explained how the projections were calculated. He said only they would use only the roads that carry a lot of traffic, such as collector roads and major roads of the area. The beauty of using the computer model, he said, was that they can add in a road and see how the traffic would change.

##### Projection of Future Year Socioeconomic Data

Employment: Mr. Norowzi's presentation also included employment data for the region, and included all industry in the study area. He had used employment data from three different sources to compile the list for the model.

Population: Mr. Norowzi explained the slides showing different elements of population data. Population statistics for the base year 2007 and projected population totals for 2035 were included in the study data. Mr. Norowzi said that the data he has shows a population decline in all the areas in the study. The Committee members contributed information about new industry that is currently undergoing development but has not begun operations, and discussed addition growth in ancillary industry associated with the main industry. They also identified some current industry data that was not included in the model data. Mr. Norowzi said the new information will make a difference in the population projections and he will recalculate the totals with the new information presented by the Committee. He said he will send the business list to several of the members and asked that they check for any industry that needs to be added or data corrected and let him know.

#### **Next Meeting**

Mrs. Morrow said the draft plans for Halifax County will be discussed at the next meeting. Mr. Mohamed said he hoped to have the Northampton draft then, but since the survey was taking more time than expected, it may not be completed by that time. February 17, 2010 at 10:00 a.m. was chosen for the next meeting. Mrs. Morrow said she hopes the meeting can be held at the Town Hall again. She said she will send out a notice to everyone prior to the meeting.

#### **Closing Notes**

There was no further discussion and the meeting was adjourned.